

Amendments to the Claims

1. (currently amended) An implantable band for treatment of a medical condition, the band comprising:

- (a) a strap configured to encircle an anatomical passageway, said strap defining a strap length extending in a [[a]] circumferential direction and a strap height perpendicular to the strap length, the circumferential strap length and the strap height defining an inner and outer surface of said strap;
- (b) first and second end portions each integrally disposed at ~~either~~ a different free end of said strap, said first and second end portions including respective inner and outer surfaces which correspond to said inner and outer surfaces of said strap;
- (c) a transverse attachment mechanism configured to attach said first end portion to said second end portion so as to secure said free ends of said strap together such that the strap encircles the anatomical passageway, said first end portion attaching to said second end portion in a transverse direction, the transverse direction being parallel to the strap height of at least one of the inner surface or the outer surface of said strap; and
- (d) an inflatable bladder disposed against one or more inner surfaces of said strap, said inflatable bladder configured to at least substantially encircle the anatomical passageway when the strap encircles the anatomical passageway.

2. (previously presented) The band of claim 1, wherein said transverse attachment mechanism comprises a transverse member formed as part of said first end portion and a transverse opening formed as part of one of said inner and outer surfaces of said second end

portion, said transverse opening configured to receive said transverse member in a transverse direction.

3. (original) The band of claim 2, wherein said transverse attachment mechanism comprises a dovetail transverse attachment mechanism having a pin portion and a tail portion, said transverse member comprising said pin portion and said transverse opening comprising said tail portion.

4. (original) The band of claim 3, wherein said transverse member has a generally trapezoidal shape and said transverse opening comprises a channel having a trapezoidal shape.

5. (original) The band of claim 4, wherein said transverse attachment mechanism includes a detent, a first part of said detent being carried by said transverse member, a second part of said detent being carried by said transverse opening.

6. (previously presented) The band of claim 3 or 4, wherein said first end portion includes a U-shaped portion, said U-shaped portion comprising a base extending laterally from said first end portion and said transverse member which extends transversally from said base thereby defining a gap.

7. (original) The band of claim 6 wherein said second end portion is configured to be disposed through said gap when said transverse member is disposed in said transverse opening.

8. (original) The band of claim 6, comprising a retaining member extending from said first end portion overlying said gap, said retaining member configured to resist withdrawal of said second end portion from said gap.

9. (original) The band of claim 8, wherein said retaining member includes a lower surface disposed generally perpendicular to said gap.

10. through 15. (canceled)

16. (currently amended) An implantable band for treatment of a medical condition, the band comprising

- (a) a strap extending in a longitudinal direction, said strap configured to encircle a portion of an anatomical passageway, said strap having a strap length defining a circumferential direction thereabout, said strap further defining a strap height at a right angle to the strap length, the circumferential strap length and the strap height defining an inner and outer surface of said strap;
- (b) first and second end portions each disposed at ~~either~~ at a different free end of said strap, said first and second end portions including respective inner and outer surfaces which correspond to said inner and outer surfaces of said strap;
- (c) said first and second end portions disposed at different free ends of said strap are configured to engage each other so as to couple said first and second end portions together, said coupled first and second end portions being subject to a separating force along the said strap length when in use encircling the anatomical passageway, said first and second end portions

further configured such that force necessary to decouple said first and second end portions is generally perpendicular to said separating force and parallel with the strap height of at least one of the inner or outer surfaces; and

- (d) an inflatable bladder disposed against one or more inner surfaces of said strap and said first and second end portions, said inflatable bladder configured to at least substantially encircle the anatomical passageway when the strap encircles the anatomical passageway.

17. (original) The band of claim 16, wherein said first and second end portions must be fully decoupled before any relative movement therebetween can occur in the longitudinal direction.

18. (currently amended) An implantable band for treatment of a medical condition, the band comprising:

- (a) a strap configured to encircle an anatomical passageway, said strap having a strap length defining a circumferential direction thereabout and a strap height perpendicular to the strap length, the circumferential strap length and the strap height defining an inner and outer surface of said strap;
- (b) first and second end portions each disposed at ~~either~~ a different free end of said elongated strap, said first and second end portions including respective inner and outer surfaces which correspond to said inner and outer surfaces of said strap;
- (c) an inflatable bladder disposed against one or more inner surfaces of said strap and said first and second end portions, said inflatable bladder configured to at least substantially encircle the anatomical passageway when the implantable band is attached about the anatomical passageway; and

- (d) means for transversely attaching said first and second end portions disposed at different free ends of said strap together in a transverse direction parallel to the strap height of at least one of the inner surface or the outer surface.